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committee to study hospital conditions, surgical treatment and sanitary medicine in Italy. The committee consisted of the following members: Majors Angus McLean, George E. McKean and Harry N. Torrey. Lieutenant Bror H. Larsson accompanies the expedition as secretary, and Captain James W. Inches represents the American Red Cross. Permission for this investigation was obtained through the Italian military authorities, and was granted for fourteen days.

DR. JOEL ASAPH ALLEN, after twenty-eight years of active service as editor of the scientific publications of the American Museum of Natural History, has resigned in order to devote his entire time to the collections of the department of mammalogy and ornithology, of which he is curator. The following is an extract from the resolution passed by the publication committee of the museum in appreciation of Dr. Allen's services:

... As the scientific editor, he has been little less than ideal, since with a natural fitness for the calling there was combined also the highest quality of scholarship in the subjects dealt with by his contributors. He was thus more than editor; rather a leader in the researches represented in the *Bulletin* and *Memoir* series.

Dr. F. E. Lutz, of the department of invertebrate zoology has been appointed to succeed Dr. Allen.

At the recent meeting of the American Association of Anatomists, held in the new Institute of Anatomy at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, the following officers were elected: *President*, Professor R. R. Bensley, of the University of Chicago; *Vice-president*, Professor C. R. Bardeen, of the University of Wisconsin; *Secretary-Treasurer*, Professor C. R. Stockard, of Cornell University; *Members of the Executive Committee*, Dr. G. L. Streeter, Carnegie Institution, Professor G. S. Huntington, Columbia University, and Professor H. E. Jordan, University of Virginia.

THE following officers have been elected by the Association of American Geographers for 1918: *President*, Nevin M. Fenneman; *First Vice-President*, Charles R. Dryer; *Second*

Vice-President, Bailey Willis; *Secretary*, Oliver L. Fassig; *Councilor*, Walter S. Tower; *Treasurer*, François E. Matthes.

THE British Air Inventions Committee appointed by Lord Cowdray, the late president of the Air Board, consists of the following members: Mr. Horace Darwin, F.R.S., chairman, Major-General Luck, vice-chairman, Sir Dugald Clerk, F.R.S., Sir Richard Glazebrook, F.R.S., Professor H. L. Callendar, F.R.S., Professor C. H. Lees, F.R.S., Professor J. E. Petavel, F.R.S., Mr. L. Bairstow, F.R.S., Lieutenant-Commander Wimperis, Major G. Taylor, Captain B. M. Jones, Captain A. V. Hill, Munitions Inventions Department, Mr. J. P. Millington and Mr. F. W. Lanchester. The main function of the committee is to investigate inventions submitted to it.

THE next lecture of the Harvey Society will be given on Saturday evening, January 12, at the New York Academy of Medicine, on "Food Chemistry in the Service of Human Nutrition," by Dr. H. C. Sherman, professor of food chemistry in Columbia University.

At University College, on December 18, Major Sir Filippo de Filippi delivered a public lecture, illustrated by lantern slides, on the sanitary services of the Italian army.

At the meeting of the Royal Statistical Society on December 18, Sir R. Henry Rew read a paper on the prospects of the world's food supplies after the war.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS

By the will of Zenas Crane, late of Dalton, Mass., public bequests of more than \$500,000 are made to various institutions, including \$200,000 to the Berkshire Museum of Natural History and Art of Pittsfield; and \$5,000 each to Washburn College, Topeka, Kans.; Yankton College, Yankton, S. D.; Idaho Industrial Institute, Weiser, Idaho; Lincoln Memorial University, Cumberland Gap, Tenn.; Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio; Berea College, Berea, Ky.; Tuskegee Normal School, Tuskegee, Ala.; Hampton Normal and Industrial School, Hampton, Va.

UNDER the will of Evelyn MacCurdy Salisbury, of New Haven, widow of the late Professor Edward E. Salisbury, Yale University is to receive the sum of fifty thousand dollars to found a professorship to be called the Charles J. MacCurdy professorship of anthropology, on condition that the university pay to George Grant MacCurdy the sum of twenty-five hundred dollars annually during his lifetime. The will also provides for a conditional annual gift of fifteen hundred dollars to be expended at the discretion of Professor MacCurdy for the benefit of the anthropological department of the Yale Museum. Another provision is that upon the decease of George Grant MacCurdy the sum of sixty thousand dollars is to be paid to either (1) Yale University to found a research fund to be called the Evelyn MacCurdy Salisbury Research Fund in Anthropology; or (2) the Connecticut College for Women at New London to found a professorship of American history as George Grant MacCurdy shall designate by his last will; a power of apportionment as between these two institutions being conferred upon him.

MRS. KING, of Worthing, has given £1,000 five per cent. war stock for the establishment in the University of Cambridge of a scholarship for research work on fevers, in memory of her daughter, Neita King, a member of a voluntary aid detachment who died of cerebrospinal fever in France last May.

THE Harvard University registration is 3,684, nearly 2,000 less than last year. The Law School shows the greatest decrease, its figures of 856 last year dropping to 296 this year. Two departments show an increased attendance, the Medical School, with an enrolment of 386, a gain of 28 over last year, and the engineering and mining department, with 591, an increase of 14.

WILLIAM M. DAVIS, Sturgis Hooper professor of geology, emeritus at Harvard University, has asked to be relieved of his position as western exchange professor, and his resignation has been accepted.

CHARLES FULLER BAKER, assistant director of the Botanic Gardens at Singapore, and professor of agronomy (on leave) at the College of Agriculture of the Philippines, has been recalled to the Philippines to assume the deanship of the College of Agriculture and the professorship of tropical agronomy due to the mid-year retirement of Dean Copeland.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

GEOLOGIC DATES IN PHYSIOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTIONS

THE protest repeatedly urged by Davis¹ against the unwarranted introduction of formation names and other irrelevant geologic material into geographic descriptions is, no doubt, heartily seconded by the majority of geographers and physiographers.

A good thing may, however, be carried too far.

A case in point, as it appears to the writer, is a description by C. A. Cotton of "Block Mountains in New Zealand," which appeared in a recent number of the *American Journal of Science*.²

Cotton's paper is a most commendable example of a physiographic description worked out along the lines advocated by Davis. The material is most effectively presented, but, in accordance with Davis's suggestions, all mention of geologic age, or dates, either of the block faulting movements or of the formations involved, is deliberately and studiously avoided.

This may be desirable from the standpoint of a geographer whose sole interest is in the present landscape, but his geological colleagues are sure to find it disappointing.

The science of geomorphology has now reached such a stage that it has an interpretative as well as a descriptive value. Geologists are coming more and more to rely upon physiographic evidence in interpreting recent earth history. Why, then, should a

¹ *Annals Assn. Amer. Geogr.*, Vol. V., 1915, p. 90.

² Cotton, C. A., "Block Mountains in New Zealand," *Am. Jour. Sci.*, 4th Ser., Vol. XLIV., 1917, pp. 249-293.